

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00  
SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 SAA-01 SSM-03 IO-13 ACDA-12  
SES-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00 /092 W  
-----063199 091052Z /13

O P 091019Z SEP 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9597  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
COMSIXTHFLT  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 5231

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINS PINT MILI ASEC LE  
SUBJ: LEBANESE SITUATION, SEPT. 9, 1978, 1230 HOURS LOCAL

REF: BEIRUT 5212 (DTG 081121Z SEP 78)

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THERE HAS BEEN HEAVY FIGHTING BETWEEN  
SYRIAN SOLDIERS AND CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN. A BOMB EXPLODED  
IN THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION MINISTER ASSAD RIZK. PHALANGE  
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FIGHTERS DETAINED A TRUCK FROM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN  
DAMASCUS FOR SEVERAL HOURS. CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN REPORTEDLY  
FIRED ON NORWEGIAN UNIFIL TROOPS TO PREVENT THEM FROM ESTAB-  
LISHING A POSITION IN MARJAYUN. FATAH EXCHANGED GUNFIRE WITH  
PRO-IRAQI FEDAYEEN IN WEST BEIRUT. THE LEFTIST AS-  
SAHAFIYAH NEWS AGENCY CARRIED A STORY OF A KUWAITI  
NEWSPAPER ALLEGING THAT SOVIET SPIES HAD INFILTRATED

THE U.S. EMBASSY IN BEIRUT. END SUMMARY.

2. SYRIAN-CHRISTIAN FIGHTING.

A. HEAVY FIGHTING BETWEEN SYRIAN SOLDIERS AND CHRISTIAN MILITIAMEN BROKE OUT IN AYN AR-RUMMANEH, FURN ASH-SHUBBAK AND SIN EL-FIL AT ABOUT 1800 HOURS SEPTEMBER 8. THE FIGHTING CONTINUED UNTIL ABOUT 1130 HOURS SEPTEMBER 9. BOTH SIDES USED ARTILLERY. ACCORDING TO AN ADF COMMUNIQUE, THE FIGHTING FOLLOWED THE KIDNAPPING OF TWO ADF SOLDIERS ALONG THE RIVER ROAD ON THE EDGE OF ASHRAFIYAH AND HEAVY SNIPING AT SYRIAN POSITIONS AT TAYYUNAH CIRCLE.

B. ABOUT FIVE ROUNDS HIT IN THE CORNICHE MAZRAA AREA OF WEST BEIRUT AT ABOUT 0630 HOURS SEPTEMBER 9, WHERE MANY LEBANESE LEFTISTS AND PALESTINIAN ORGANIZATIONS HAVE OFFICES. SOME ROUNDS ALSO HIT THIS AREA ON SEPTEMBER 5 (SEE SEPTEMBER 6 SITREP).

3. BOMB DAMAGES MINISTER'S OFFICE.

A. AT 1445 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 8 AN ESTIMATED TWO KILOGRAMS OF TNT HEAVILY DAMAGED THE OFFICE OF EDUCATION MINISTER ASSAD RIZK IN THE UNESCO COMPOUND IN WEST BEIRUT. THERE WERE NO CASUALTIES SINCE RIZK AND OTHERS HAD LEFT THE OFFICE. COMMENT: THE BOMB WAS PROBABLY  
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LEFTIST RETALIATION FOR THE MINISTER'S DECISION TO POSTPONE THE HIGH SCHOOL BACCALAUREATE EXAMINATIONS (SEE SEPTEMBER 8 SITREP). PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS DESCRIBED THE EXPLOSION AS "A CRIMINAL ACT."

B. MUSLIM LEFTIST SAMIR SABBAGH, A MURABITUN VICE PRESIDENT, TOLD NEWSMEN AFTER MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD BOWED TO PRESSURE FROM THE MARONITE PARTIES IN POSTPONING THE EXAMINATIONS. SABBAGH ADDED: "I CONVEYED TO PRIME MINISTER AL HOSS THE CITIZENS' DISPLEASURE WITH THE DECISION OF THE EDUCATION MINISTER TO POSTPONE THE EXAMINATIONS FOR THIS YEAR INDEFINITELY." (COMMENT: AS INDICATED PREVIOUSLY, THE MARONITE PARTIES HAVE BEEN PRESSING FOR POSTPONEMENT BECAUSE MANY OF THEIR YOUNG MEN HAVE BEEN MANNING THE BARRICADES RATHER THAN STUDYING. THE MUSLIM LEFTISTS HAVE BEEN URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO HOLD THE EXAMINATIONS AS SCHEDULED.  
END COMMENT.)

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4. U.S. TRUCK DETAINED.

AT ABOUT 12-15 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 8 PHALANGE FIGHTERS  
IN THE BEIRUT SUBURB OF AL HADATH STOPPED A TRUCK OF THE  
AMERICAN EMBASSY IN DAMASCUS WHICH WAS ENROUTE TO THE  
AMERICAN EMBASSY IN BEIRUT. THE FIGHTERS HELD THE TWO  
SYRIAN DRIVERS OF THE TRUCK FOR ABOUT THREE HOURS BEFORE  
RELEASING THEM. THE MILITIAMEN GAVE US BACK THE TRUCK AT  
ABOUT 1830 HOURS SEPTEMBER 8 AFTER WE HAD INTERVENED  
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DIRECTLY WITH BACHIR GEMAYEL, THE PHALANGIST MILITARY  
COMMANDER.

5. SOUTH LEBANON.

SOUTH LEBANON IS GENERALLY QUIET, ACCORDING TO A RELIABLE SOURCE (SEPTTEL). UNIFIL HAS STILL NOT ESTABLISHED NEW POSITIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES, HOWEVER, COMMENT: ON AUGUST 30 THE UNHQ IN JERUSALEM ANNOUNCED THAT THE CHRISTIAN MILITIAS HAD AGREED TO ALLOW UNIFIL TO ESTABLISH NEW POSITIONS IN THE CHRISTIAN ENCLAVES, INCLUDING "LIAISON OFFICES" IN MARJAYUN AND BINT JUBAYL. SAAD HADDAD AND SAMI SHIDIAK HAVE REPEATED THERE WAS NO SUCH AGREEMENT AND HAVE SO FAR REFUSED TO ALLOW THE U.N. TO ESTABLISH NEW POSITIONS IN THE ENCLAVES. END COMMENT.

6. INTER-PALESTINIAN CLASHES.

FROM ABOUT 1730 TO 1900 HOURS ON SEPTEMBER 8 FATAH AND PRO-IRAQI PALESTINIAN STRUGGLE FRONT FIGHTERS EXCHANGED MACHINE GUN AND RPG FIRE IN THE SPORTS CITY AND FAKAHANI AREAS OF WEST BEIRUT. IKE QUOTED INFORMED SOURCES AS SAAYING THE FIGHTING STARTED AFTER THE PSF HAD KIDNAPPED A MEMBER OF FATAH. FATAH THEN STORMED THE OFFICES OF THE PSF IN FAKAHANI AND CAPTURED ALL THE PEOPLE IN IT.

7. ALLEGED SOVIET SPIES IN U.S. EMBASSY.

LEFTIST AS-SAHAFIYAH NEWS AGENCY ON SEPTEMBER 8 CARRIED A REPORT OF THE KUWAITI NEWSPAPER AS-SIYASAH WHICH CLAIMED THAT SOVIET SPIES HAD INFILTRATED THE AMERICAN CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBASSY IN BEIRUT. AS-SIYASAH, ACCORDING TO THE NEWS AGENCY, SAID THE DISCOVERY OF THIS INFILTRATION HAD PRECIPITATED THE "SUDDEN" TRANSFERS OF AMBASSADOR PARKER, DCM GEORGE LANE, MILITARY ATTACHE EDWARD BADOLATO AND FIRST SECRETARY PAUL MOLINEAUX. IKE, ON SEPTEMBER 9, QUOTED A U.S. EMBASSY SPOKESMAN AS SAYING THIS REPORT WAS "SHEER NONSENCE."  
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## Message Attributes

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